

Income Maintenance Advisory Committee

Division of Economic Support

(Updated 6-22-01)

M I N U T E S

Thursday May 17, 2001
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

State Capitol Building
Room 328NW
Madison, Wi

County Attendees: **Jackie Bennett**, Racine Co. WDC, **Dick Buschmann**, Milwaukee Co. DHS, **Jill Erickson**, Milwaukee Co. DHS, **Jane Huebsch**, Marathon Co. DSS, **Ed Kamin**, Tri-Chair, Kenosha Co. JC, **Robert Macaux**, Florence Co. DHS, **John Rathman**, Outagamie Co., **Sue Schmitz**, Waukesha Co. DHH, **Judy Stienbicer**, Rock Co. DHS, Waukesha Co. DHS, **Sarah Shackleton**, Dane Co. DHS, and **Sheryl Siegel**, Winnebago Co.

State Attendees: **Charles Billings**, DWS/Fraud Unit, **Rita Black-Radloff**, DWS/BWSP, **Anthony Esealuka**, BFS, **Ginevra Ewers**, BWSP Contract Unit, **Tim Hine**, BWSP, **Jim Jones**, DHFS/DHCF, **Geri Mayhew**, DWS Training; Cheryl **McIlquham**, DHFS/DHCF, **Amy Mendel-Clemens**, BFS, **Mary Rowin**, DWS Deputy Administrator, **Marilyn Rudd**, BWSP/ONSPI, **Simonini**, **Fay**, DWS/PACU; **Ann Smith**, Civil Rights Officer, **Ann Smith**, AA/EEO Human Resources, **Shawn Smith**, BWSP, **Edie Sprehn**, **Joe Stafford**, PI, **Susan Wood**, DHFS/DHCF, and **Rick Zynda**, BWSP/ONSPI.



General Administrative Announcements

Eric Baker, the newly appointed Administrator for the Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) sent his regrets. Due to a scheduling conflict he was unable to attend this meeting.

Joe Stafford announced a change in the tri-chairs. Susan Wood and Joe will assume the roles for each of their respective Division Administrators. Ed Kamin, Kenosha County, will continue as tri-chair, representing the IMAC members.

Our next IMAC meeting will be held on **Thursday, June 21st**. The site for this meeting will be the **State Capitol Building, room number 225NW**. The meeting room number has changed so please take special note of the room number.

DWD Budget Update

The Division of Workforce Solutions' (DWS) budget proposals for the 2001 – 2003 biennium were Presented by Shawn Smith, Administrative Policy Advisor. Items Shawn thought were of interest and importance were -

- Projected \$95 million dollar shortfall in Child Care funding and \$78 million structural deficit in TANF
- DWD's budget proposals should be before Joint Finance the first week in June.
The Senate may be reviewing it the 2nd week in June.
The proposed timeline would then be a budget by the 4th of July.
- Joint Finance Hearings voted to add 36 million for Child Care
- There are a number of Food Stamp Reinvestment and Child Care funding questions which DWD staff are being asked to respond to.
- The Legislative Fiscal Bureau revised their recent projections on the General Purpose Revenue (GPR) shortfall, raising it from \$500 million to \$700 million.

Food Stamp Update

Rick Zynda had four handouts for the IMAC members. – USDA/FNS letter to Secretary Reinert announcing the FY2000 error rate and the cost to Wisconsin, Wisconsin's FS Federal Act recommendations, Food Stamp Error rates, by county, from 10/2000 to 01/2001, and a Food Stamp Error Summary.

The Food Stamp Penalty Letter from USDA was much higher than had been expected. Wisconsin's initial liability of \$2,098,583 was reduced to \$1,671,222. The letter doesn't explain how the amount was calculated so Wisconsin has requested clarification from FNS. We have not received a response to our letter at this date. No decision will be made on an appeal until we have received additional information. Another letter has just been sent FNS requesting a thirty-day extension from the receipt of their response letter. We have sixty days to submit a plan but the question at the moment is "from what date".

Other states are questioning the Federal sanction amounts as well. Some have requested APHSA assist them by polling other states.

Susan Wood asked if the potential \$1.6 million dollars in Reinvestment money can all be reinvested, with FNS approval. Rick's response was yes. However the Resettlement language is more vague than in previous years.

Ed Kamin mentioned that in the morning County only meeting there was discussion about developing a workload lab to QC and attempt to quantify how much time it takes to complete certain tasks. Through this study perhaps best practices could be identified to create a model to maximize payment accuracy. One could argue that more of our populations works so other states could model our final design. Could reinvestment money be used for this?

Rick said we can't duplicate normal administrative costs with reinvestment money but he will do some further investigation on this suggestion.

An interesting statistic was found in reviewing the FS Error Data – 65.8% of the cases in 1999 and 2000 were earned income cases.

Some important food stamp related meetings will be coming up in the next several weeks. On Wednesday, May 30th FNS Regional Staff are coming to Madison to discuss Wisconsin issues. This will be followed by a "Food Stamp Directors" meeting, June 12th and 13th, which both Joe Stafford and Rick Zynda will attend.

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) will enforce contract language allowing the charge back of penalties, for Agency Preventable Errors (APEs), to the local agencies. Dane County will be liable for \$25,000 and Milwaukee will pay \$477,918 in APE penalties. These sums will be withheld from their July 2001 payment.

Food Stamp Waivers

ONSPI policy staff developed an issue paper that would allow the exemption of Child Support Income in eligibility determinations for food stamps. Cost neutrality must be demonstrated when a waiver is submitted and the State wasn't able to develop a formula that would support it. This change in policy would cost approximately \$12 million and on \$2 million in savings could be identified. So, we may not be able to implement this policy change.

Change Reporting Waiver – is an alternative for the waiver just described. This would affect unearned income from private sources (and this can include Child Support Income) and could be implemented quickly since there would be no changes to CARES. This could potentially go into affect this summer and impact this year's error rate.

ONSPI policy staff are also reviewing a State of Washington Waiver that involves reporting any changes. In this waiver no changes are required to be reporting within each six month certification period. This would include all cases, both income and non-income.

However, when changes are reported for any program of assistance they must be acted on for Food Stamps as well. This waiver requires the worker to act only on changes that would increase a client's food stamp benefit. This would be an additional burden for workers. CARES will have to be programmed to appropriately apply all reported changes. Until CARES can be programmed, we don't want to implement this policy change.

There has been a Department of Administration (DOA) workgroup meeting to develop recommendations from the State of Wisconsin for the 2002 Food Stamp Reauthorization Act. Items on which there was group consensus will be submitted to APHSA.

The on-line Food Stamp Handbook is in the process of being tested. Provider issues slowed down the development process but ONSPI staff are still projecting an end of summer implementation date. There are a number of local agency staff identified to test it to a greater extent before it will be deemed ready for production.

The Office formerly known as the Office of Food Stamps and Medical Assistance (OFSMA) has been renamed the Office of Nutritional Services and Program Integrity (ONSPI)

Staff Training Initiatives

Geri Mayhew told us they have nearly completed all of the Partnership Training. All trainers were in Milwaukee with the New Model Training and comments were that it is spectacular.

Geri wanted to especially thank Rock, Kenosha, and Outagamie Counties for allowing piloting of this New Worker Training to occur within their agencies.

Ed Kamin commented that the new CBT courses are much more user friendly than those available in the past. He also commented that the Civil Rights piece is very good. Geri said the Civil Rights piece doesn't meet all of the current requirements but will be updated very soon.

Medicaid training is available on line for in-house use and is fully approved.

Each piece of these new training initiatives is being evaluated to determine how well it is working and to see what doesn't work.

If there are any questions about what is available or an agency wishes to receive material please contact either Geri at 608-267-5056 or mayhege@dwd.state.wi.us or Silas Johnson at 608-267-1413 or johnssi@dwd.state.wi.us.

The DWS Training Unit is also taping material for audio use. It is very good.

Jackie Bennett commented that the on-line training site was beautiful and well done. The volume of information seems overwhelming at first but once you've completed one section you become more comfortable with the flow.

MA Update

Susan Wood had updates on – dental issues, Medicaid caseloads, budget, program simplification feedback, and Family Care.

Dental access is a problem. It's an issue across the country and there are a number of tactics currently being employed. Susan will bring a status report to our next IMAC meeting. There are hearings underway at Regional meetings and a letter is being drafted for all agencies regarding dental access.

The Medicaid caseload is at the highest point in many years – 506,013 individuals at the end of April 2001. This jump is in Family Medicaid – BadgerCare, Healthy Start, AFDC related. SSI case loads have remained fairly steady and Institutional have gone down. This rise in family Medicaid might, in part, be explained as a cyclical jump and/or it may also be related to the current economy.

Susan handed out a chart that summarized the following DHFS Budget issues. (The following descriptions are brief overviews of the more complete descriptions contained in the original document.)

- Family Care – continues funding for 5 current pilots
- BadgerCare Insurance Verification & change in Policy on “coverage” – changes eligibility policy

- Eliminate MA Asset Test – eliminates the asset requirement for AFDC-Medicaid and AFDC-related
- MA SSI MC Expansion – Expands current I-Care program in Milwaukee to additional Managed Care organizations (MCOs)
- Medicaid coverage of individuals diagnosed with Breast or Cervical Cancer – New optional services at T-21 enhanced federal match
- Irrevocable Burial Trusts – Increases the amount of Irrevocable burial trust that may be excluded from assets from \$2500 to \$3300, for elderly and disabled persons
- Align COP and Waiver Programs with Family Care – Adds requirement that CBRFs must refer those seeking admission to the COP agency
- Prescription Drug Assistance Plan Demonstration Project – Requires DHFS to seek waiver to expand Medicaid prescription drugs coverage to seniors who are – at least 65, are otherwise ineligible for Medicaid, have annual household income no more than 185% of the FPL, have been without available prescription drug coverage (other than Medicaid) for at least 12 months.
- MA Eligibility Administration Transfers from DWD to DHFS – moves current MOU funding from DWD to DHFS for eligibility administration.

Program Simplification – a number of presentations have already occurred and more are scheduled throughout June. There are two major changes –

Family Medicaid/BadgerCare applicants, for MA only, decide how to apply:

Mail-In
Phone-in
Face to Face

There will be reduced verifications, only 5 will be required:

Social Security Number (SSN)
Citizen/Alien Status
Pregnancy
Disability
Assets for the Elderly/Blind/Disabled

Everything else is self-declared. Workers will be asked to refer to the IM definition of questionable if more information is needed.

There will be a quality assurance component for this simplification initiative. Open and terminated cases will be reviewed to determine if further training is necessary and maintain program integrity.

Susan asked the IMAC members what they were hearing regarding this simplification initiative.

Sarah Shackleton, Dane Co. DHS, had some updates regarding the simplified Medicaid pilot project currently underway in Dane.

The simplified process was slow in starting up.
A targeted outreach is occurring with the Latino community.
Applications are easy to process
Calling for further information – phone tag does occur

Dane County believes there will need to be a change in worker's "mind set" to fully implement this new Medicaid process.

An Operations Memo will go out in early June and will include frequently asked questions.

Updates by Workload Committee

The new IM allocations will be out shortly in their final version.

Caseloads, performance standard, quality control and further simplification were discussed in the morning session. Administrative simplification may need to be taken further with additional new programs i.e. Drug/Prescription.

CARES Update

Tim Hineline provided a handout (Attachment I) of CARES changes. There will be an Administrator's Memo regarding the COLA corrections to alert Director's to the actions being taken in July.

The maintenance contract for CARES will be sent out in another week or two. Once awarded open records will allow interested individuals to access information regarding all applications.

Civil Rights Compliance

Ann Smith provided a number of handouts related to language compliance – Limited English Proficiency Compliance Resources, "draft" Administrator's Memo titled "Civil Rights Compliance Plans Including New Language Access Plan Requirements", "Language Access Plan", "Limited English Proficiency Data", "Documents to be Posted to the Web Site" and BWI Forms by Title.

The total State population data was extracted from the 2000 Data Census and used to identify population divisions that indicate language isolation due to limited English proficiency. Eighteen percent of the Spanish speaking population were identified as isolated in 1999. Similar assumptions were used in 2000 and "Limited English Proficiency" chart was created by county. This should be helpful in creating Local Agency Civil Rights plans.

Ed Kamin voiced concern that the "ATT Language Line" is less than satisfactory. Ann agreed and said local resources or contracting between agencies is preferred.

Dick Buschmann pointed out that these costs need to be factored into IM Administrative costs. Access to language resources doesn't "just happen".

There is a newly formed workgroup looking at all of the Division's material and its availability.



Next meeting:

Date: June 21, 2001

Location: State Capitol, Conference Room 225NW Madison, WI

Attachment I

RECENT AND UPCOMING CARES CHANGES OVERVIEW Issued May 17, 2001

Major Initiatives: Completed or in Progress	DATE	BACKGROUND
Benefit Recovery/Fraud (including Data Exchange)	May 2001	Fixes to the FS and AFDC worksheets are being worked on along with some of the associated simulation problems; schedule 6/29. Changes to Data Exchange disposition alerts are being made to eliminate alerts on closed cases, give FYI alerts to workers on the case who will not be responsible for the dispositions and give alerts to the proper workers after a case transfer.
Child Care	June 2001	Child Care staff is continuing work on putting the provider query (CCPI) on the WEB. Target date for this enhancement is 6/22.
Food Stamps	May 2001	The fix to Food Stamp pop opens will be implemented on 5/25. Fixes to the expedited and priority Service processes will also be implemented at that time.
	June 2001	Removal of vehicle assets in the FS eligibility determination is scheduled for July 2001.
Medicaid	May 2001	The MA Power Cascade, a worker option that will reduce cascading to one iteration of the SFU screens, is on schedule for implementation on 5/25. Removal of the ADCU logic and work quarters from Medicaid determinations will also be implemented in May.
	July 2001	Changes to support simplification of verification for MA are scheduled for July.
COLA Mass Change	July 2001	There will be a special COLA mass change (MC) the weekend of July 7-8. This is to correct an error in the Feds calculation of the increase for 2000. This error also affected the 2001 SSA and SSI income amounts. The change will be effective for August benefits in CARES. The lump sum check that will be received by the client is to be disregarded by the workers. An Ops-memo is forthcoming.
Clocks	June 2001	The clock screen (AIWC) is being modified to display the federal 60-month clock. AIWE will be modified to record extension requests to the state 60-month clock. Both screens are being redesigned to improve clarity. All clock tables are being modified to include new extension reasons. Implementation 6/22
Drug Felons	July 2001	The sanction/closure process for Drug Felons in Food Stamps will be automated in CARES in July. W2 Drug Felon processes will also be enhanced/modified.
RACF	Summer 2001	Security for accessing CARES, as well as a number of other systems, is being converted from ACF2 to RACF. Extensive work is being done to ensure that this project does not affect user access.
User enhancements – PF7	Ongoing	PF7 (paging backward) is being routinely added to screens that did not have this as work is done on those screens.
Client Notice Redesign	Ongoing	Research and planning has begun on Phase II. At this point, appearance, as it relates to readability, is one of the primary redesign objectives of Phase II. In addition, the possibility of grouping a number of maintenance projects that affect the quality of notices is being considered.
Major initiatives: In Planning/Development		
MAPP and Caretaker Supplement	November 2001	Work has begun to develop requirements for automation in CARES of eligibility for Medicaid Purchase Plan and Caretaker Supplement. Caretaker Supplement will also include interface with EDS for sharing of payment eligibility and payment issuance information between CARES and EDS.
Addresses	No date set	Work on Modifications to Finalist (Address verification software) continues. Other address issues, such as collecting individual addresses and update access to addresses after programs have closed, are being researched.